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PROGRAM OF MARCH MEETING ENCLOSED.

THE ENGLISH LEAFLET

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ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

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OUR LOCAL ENGLISH MEETINGS

[Blizzards, curtailed train service, and illness have of necessity postponed many local English Conferences during the last two months. Yet a surprisingly large number have been held, and reports of others to come are numerous. Best of all, we have yet to hear of a neighborhood gathering of English teachers that has not been enthusiastic and eager to carry out Mr. Hinchman's plan of local organizations. So strongly do we believe that this movement is the best thing our Association has ever undertaken, that we are devoting this entire *Leaflet* to selected reports from our various newly organized English Clubs in New England. Read them! If you already belong to a Local Conference, you will find them stimulating; if you do not, you will find in them just the spur you need to arouse you to join the English teachers of your district in discussion of your common problems and your common aims.—Ed.]

NEW HAMPSHIRE CONFERENCES

Director, Mrs. Mary H. Dowd, Mount Saint Mary, Hooksett, N. H.

In each of the fourteen centers for local English conferences, organized at the annual meeting of the New Hampshire State Teachers' Association at Manchester, October 17, 1919, one meeting has been held, and in all sections but two there will be at least one more meeting before the close of this school year.

The total attendance was 138. Of this number eight were superintendents and as many more principals. These men and women, though not themselves directly in charge of English classes, thus gave evidence of their interest in the new movement and of their desire to help it along. The spirit of co-operation was everywhere most encouraging. At one meeting every grade, from first primary to senior high, was represented; at three others,

teachers of public and private schools found that they had interests in common; in one instance plans were made for working out a uniform nomenclature in grammar from the lower grades up, and in another for listing in the same way essentials to be stressed throughout the entire course, as distinguished from points that may be touched lightly or, of necessity, omitted altogether.

Without exception the sub-chairmen report a general sentiment in favor of the local meeting project, but for reasons almost identical two chairmen feel that conditions in their sections are against further meetings at present. Says one of these: "Teachers who should attend are so scattered geographically and train connections are so limited that at least half a day would have to be given to each meeting. This cannot be done because the weekly holiday in one place is Monday and in the other places Saturday." Both these chairmen state, however, that their superintendents devote generous time, in their regular teachers' meetings, to the discussion of English, so that in these districts the purpose of the larger conference is really being attained.

A few extracts from reports of widely separated sections are typical of all: "Such meetings are exactly what we want down in this corner of the state;" "I do feel that we accomplished something;" "It was a good beginning, and the interest shown augurs well for future meetings;" "The power of the meeting grew. It took a few minutes for the ideas to flow, but I heard only expressions of satisfaction. Some had come with skeptical minds—skeptical, that is, with respect to the real value of such a meeting. I am reasonably certain that these went away feeling repaid."

The following tabulation records the section, its chairman, the number present at this first meeting, and one or more of the topics discussed, with an explanatory note or two where such seems called for:

Claremont—Anne L. Forsythe; 7. The Grammar Problem.

Concord—Francis T. Clayton; 16. Of twelve topics, interest centered on Where Should Argumentation Begin. It seemed to be the general opinion that a kind of informal "disputation" should be encouraged in the lower classes of the secondary unit; that pupils should be urged to maintain their opinions in open forum, but that formal argumentation rightly belongs in college classes, as pupils of high-school age have not enough judgment to be assigned a side of an argument in which they do not sincerely believe.

Dover—Minna G. Boomer; 2. The small attendance was due to a misunderstanding as to the time appointed. Plans were made for the next meeting.

Exeter—Mildred Diman; 7. Outside Reading; Magazines for the English Class; Books for reading in the Junior High.

Hanover—Theodore Bacon; see under Lebanon.

Keene—Mildred Flynn; 7. Articulation of the Junior and Senior High Schools. It was decided to investigate conditions and make a report at the regular monthly meeting of teachers.

Laconia and Lakeport—Edwin L. Swain; 10. Informal discussion of local needs, of some methods mentioned in *How the French Boy Learns to Write*, and assignments of topics for a January meeting.

Lebanon—Mrs. Charlotte T. Roberts; 29. Seventeen teachers from various towns in this part of the state, with twelve English teachers from Vermont towns, were the guests of the Bi-State Educational Club. Two papers were read: English from the Teacher's Point of View; English from an Official's Point of View. There were given, also, by Professor Jordan of Dartmouth, results of tests participated in, some two weeks before, by all the English classes in fifteen or twenty of the schools represented at the meeting. These tests, based on certain assigned work in the silent reading of selected prose or poetry, and in composition, were intended to show the power of pupils to interpret the printed page, to appreciate simple poetry, and to write clearly on a practical topic within their own experience. The meeting was most enthusiastic and helpful.

Lisbon—Mary F. Murphy; 4. Methods of Teaching Spelling; Class Correction of Themes.

Manchester—Anna B. Murphy; 9. Spoken English.

Nashua—Clara F. Preston; 16. What Pupils Should Know in Grammar When They Enter the High School.

Plymouth—Phila Griffin; 5. Supplementary Reading for Grades Below the High School.

Portsmouth—Florence Hewett; 15. Articulation of English Work from the first Primary Grade to the Second Year High.

Tilton—Fred A. Smart; 11. The Place and the Function of the Dictionary in English Teaching.

WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS SECTION

C. W. Robinson, Director

The Western Massachusetts Section was organized at the Central High School, Dec. 6, 1919. Over a hundred persons were present at the morning session, and fifty were present at the luncheon. The program has been printed in the December "Leaflet."

There are three flourishing and successful local conference groups: one under Miss Marian Atherton, of

Greenfield; one under M. B. Sanford of Holyoke; and one under Hermann F. Fritz, High School of Commerce, Springfield. Thus far no response has been received from Pittsfield, Adams, or No. Adams. It is hoped that this spring local groups will organize in those two sections.

The Greenfield local conference under Marion B. Atherton as chairman got an enthusiastic start on County Convention day in December at Greenfield. Ten towns were represented; monthly meetings were voted.

The Holyoke local conference held its first meeting, Nov. 22. The second meeting, held on Jan. 7, discussed Freshman composition. The March 10th meeting is concerned with the library. Mr. M. B. Sanford writes that between forty and fifty teachers are attending.

The Springfield local conference, under H. F. Fritz, organized Jan. 31. The subject discussed was "The Correlation of First and Second Year Written Compositions." Forty persons from the surrounding places came. By unanimous vote it was asserted that help was most wanted in written composition. The entire group felt the need of discussion concerning standards to be required in written composition, regarding both technique and content. The next meeting will be given over to the discussion of grammar and the sentence. Meetings are to be held March 6, April 3, and May 8.

HOLYOKE DISTRICT

Morris B. Sanford, Chairman

The second meeting of the Holyoke district of the Western Massachusetts Association of Teachers of English met in the Northampton High School, Wednesday, January 7, at 4 P.M. Miss Mabel Judd of Holyoke High School spoke on "Freshman Composition in the High School." This was followed by a brief discussion. Then Principal Remy, of the Forest Park Junior High School of Springfield, spoke on "English in the Junior High School." This, in turn, was followed by discussion.

Although an attendance of about fifteen was expected, there were present about fifty teachers from the various High Schools, Colleges, Junior High Schools, and Private Schools in the vicinity of Northampton.

There seems to be a great desire on the part of teachers of English for just such meetings as are being held.

The next meeting will be held at the Holyoke High School on Wednesday, March 10, at 4 P. M. The subject will be "The Use of the Library and Outside Reading." There will be two speakers: Miss Fay, Librarian of the Holyoke High School, and Mr. Robinson, Head of the Department of English at Springfield Central High School. Each member will be notified of the subject in advance and will be asked to come prepared to take part in the discussion.

Besides the March meeting, two other meetings of this local unit are planned for the year.

BOSTON AND VICINITY

Director, Miss Sally Freeman Dawes, Quincy High School, Quincy, Mass.

In my district I have appointed eight section-organizers as follows: Boston, Carolyn M. Gerrish; West of Boston, Samuel Thurber; South of Boston, Adelaide Nichols; North of Boston, Ruth L. S. Child; Framingham, Alice Treat; Fitchburg, Helen Stratton; Worcester, Samuel F. Holmes; South Worcester County, Marietta Knight.

The district around Concord has not yet been organized, for I have been unable so far to find anyone willing to undertake the work. Of the groups above mentioned all except Boston proper and Worcester proper are known to be at work.

The South of Boston Club has held several successful and profitable meetings. The best of these dealt with the problem of theme correcting. At this meeting all present were given a theme—the same—to correct and discuss. This Club, representing eight schools in six towns, is under the direction of a committee of which Miss Adelaide Nichols of Milton Academy is Chairman. In Norfolk County, enthusiasm for local meetings prevails in and about Quincy only. Numerous attempts by letter to arouse interest in other parts of the county have failed. The Club, however, intends to attack the problem this spring and hopes by means of a Saturday meeting dealing with a pertinent topic to bring the more

distant sections of the county to the Milton-Quincy way of thinking. This meeting was originally planned for February, but weather conditions have postponed it. It will probably occur in April.

The North of Boston Club has moved forward along much the same lines as those pursued in past years. They were very active in the Better Speech Week campaign. Since then they have been concerned with Departmental Supervision and the need of separating the Rhetoric and Literature courses. Miss Child writes that their plans for the year are not formulated, but concludes "so things are looking up in the North of Boston Group."

From Framingham Miss Treat writes, "We have been having very delightful and helpful meetings here in Framingham the first Wednesday in every month." They have held four meetings, each one in charge of a different town. They are hoping for a meeting soon at which there shall be an outside speaker. Miss Treat thinks this will serve to increase the interest of the members, though she writes, "The twelve to fifteen women present are constantly talking and, oddly, always about English!" Their one man, she adds, has weakened and left them. Perhaps the outside speaker will effect his return. This group has a membership of twenty teachers from eight towns. I am hoping Miss Treat will be able to establish other group meetings in her section.

Fitchburg has not reported since November. At that time, things were looking up there. Miss Stratton had last fall staged a successful meeting and aroused interest in local meetings. As a result, she reports the organization of groups in Lunenburg and Barre. Each of these includes two towns other than those mentioned.

In South Worcester County Miss Knight has organized two local groups: The Western Community English Club under the leadership of Miss Catherine O'Keefe of Southbridge and the Quaboag English Club under the leadership of Miss Harlane M. Kane of Spencer. Each of these groups includes four towns. Miss Knight is intensely interested in the work and very anxious to get all her towns to working. Like most of us she has found great difficulty in stirring up any enthusiasm in certain of the localities.

Despite the lack of response in many quarters and the many difficulties of transportation, I feel that the work in this district has a very good start and promises well for another year. I find that many teachers have just discovered that there is a New England Association of Teachers of English, but I regret to find that the newer and younger teachers to whom we could be of so much assistance, do not feel the need of our help. "We have not time for such meetings," one of them told me! Such a state of affairs is truly pathetic. She may some day see what she has missed.

NORTH EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS

Director, Miss Mabel A. Watson, Haverhill High School,
Haverhill, Mass.

The Newburyport-Amesbury-Merrimac group has already had two most successful meetings, the first at Newburyport, the second at Amesbury. A third was to have been held on Feb. 5 at Merrimac in Miss Russell's school. Also on Feb. 5 Mr. Sturtevant had planned to have a meeting at Lowell. These two conferences, postponed by the storm, will probably occur soon.

The Peabody-Danvers-Beverly group has had two good meetings so far.

Our own group, now called the Merrimac Valley English Club, held a very pleasant meeting at the Lawrence High School on Wednesday, January 28. A question box started some interesting and valuable exchange of opinions. Hot chocolate and cake were served. Miss McDonald is eager and helpful in her co-operation.

MISCELLANEOUS

Rhode Island. Clarence H. Manchester of the Providence Technical High School, Chairman for Rhode Island, reports that a most promising meeting on the subject, "High School Libraries," planned for Feb. 5, had to be given up on account of the blizzard. "I am not sure," he writes, "whether we shall have this same topic on April 22 or not. We want to give a part of our time on that occasion to the discussion of what we hear at Boston on March 20.

It has been a hard winter to get people out, but from all that I hear the English teachers of Rhode Island are most enthusiastic for several local meetings each year. It's a great idea!"

Maine. S. R. Oldham, Maine Central Institute, Pittsfield, Chairman for Maine, writes: "The Waterville Neighborhood English Teachers' Club met on January 9 with fifteen present. We decided to meet once a month. Miss Catherine Hurley of the Waterville High School is permanent chairman. A letter from Miss Bessie Cooper of Presque Isle states that she has arranged for a conference of the English teachers in Aroostook County for Jan. 22 in connection with the County Convention."

South-Eastern Massachusetts. A. D. Whitman of the New Bedford High School, Chairman of the South-Eastern Mass. District reports as follows: "The only meeting held so far in my district has been one in which the English teachers of the New Bedford and Fairhaven High Schools met and informally discussed their common problems. No papers were read and much of the business of the meeting concerned methods of organizing and making arrangements for future gatherings. There was a strong sentiment in favor of holding regular meetings with definite topics for discussion. The next meeting in March is to be devoted to the topic, 'Standard Scales and Measurements.'

One outgrowth of the movement in New Bedford and Fairhaven worth mentioning is the institution of joint meetings of the editorial boards of the student periodicals in the two schools. One such conference—and a most gratifying one—has already taken place."

Leominster-Fitchburg. Miss Helen Stratton writes to Miss Dawes that the Leominster-Fitchburg group is planning a meeting for March at which they intend to discuss experiments in school-papers. Such a topic, with a supper accompaniment (as proposed) should bring out a large attendance.

West of Boston Club. The second meeting of the winter will be held on March 23 to discuss the papers presented at the Boston meeting of March 20. Another conference, to be held in Cambridge, will take place in April to consider Miss Dowd's admirable paper, in the

January Leaflet, on "Possibilities of Ethical Instruction through Literature."

Connecticut. G. F. Cherry, Loomis Institute, Windsor, has accepted the important position of Chairman of Local Conferences for Connecticut. He has already under way plans for meetings this spring in several parts of that state.

Vermont. John E. Colburn, principal of the Burlington High School and Director of Local Meetings in Vermont reports that there has been one meeting in the St. Albans District, held at Enosburg Falls; three meetings in the Burlington district, one at Burlington, one at Richmond, and one at Essex Junction; one meeting in the Morrisville district at Morrisville; two meetings in the Rutland district, both at Fair Haven. "In each of these conferences subjects were taken from the list given in the October *Leaflet*. The universal report of teachers was that they received very great benefit from the meetings and hope to continue with increased attendance another year with better weather conditions.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You should receive with this LEAFLET your program for the Annual Meeting to be held in the Public Library in Boston, Saturday morning, March 20th. Unless your dues are paid up to March 1921, you should also receive a blank for renewal of your membership. Don't forget to send this slip, with a dollar, to Mr. A. B. DeMille, Milton Academy, the treasurer of our association.



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